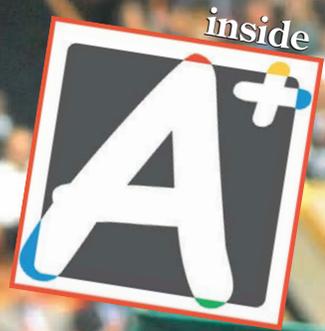


Great Falls
CONNECTION

Saxons Take Next Step

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The Langley High School Class of 2011 applauds before taking their seats for the graduation ceremony at DAR Constitution Hall on Thursday, June 16.

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PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/CONNECTION

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PHOTOS BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Liezal D'souza of the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department burns an American flag to dispose of it in the proper way Tuesday, June 14 at the Great Falls Freedom Memorial.



Larry McKinley, the Senior National 2nd Vice President of the Sons of the American Revolution presents Liezal D'souza of the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department with a certificate thanking the department for their patriotism in displaying the American flag and for supporting their annual Flag Day ceremony.



PHOTO BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

Great Falls Optimists Tom Moore and Sara Darnell join club president T.R. Cook as he accepts the framed proclamation from Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust honoring the Optimists' dedication to supporting families affected by childhood cancer.

Optimists Honored

Great Falls club raises money, awareness on childhood cancer.

Recognizing the Optimists Club's nationwide campaign to fund childhood cancer research and support affected families, Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) issued a proclamation on June 13 on behalf of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors honoring the Great Falls Optimists Club. The presentation was held in Foust's office at the governmental center in McLean.

"Be it resolved," Foust read from the proclamation, "that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, on behalf of all residents of Fairfax County, does hereby proclaim June 2011 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month."

"I appreciate everything the Optimists Club does," said Foust, "but their particular emphasis on helping children with cancer is very moving and important."

The struggles that families face are enormous when a child is battling cancer, said president of the Great Falls Optimist Club, T.R. Cook of Vienna. Through its fundraising programs, the Optimists provide support to the children and their caregivers. Funds raised by the Great Falls Optimists are donated to affected families and to Johns Hopkins Pediatric Oncology through Optimists International.

The Great Falls Optimists have raised \$2,500 so far this year, donating \$1,000 of it to a Great Falls-area family whose child is undergoing cancer

treatment. The Optimists work closely with Hope Cam, a locally-based nonprofit that supplies computer equipment and webcams to homebound students undergoing treatment for cancer or other life-threatening illnesses. The equipment connects the children with their classrooms, and is given to the sick children at no cost to the families or the schools.

"When they return to school, they're not strangers in their classes," said Cook.

The Great Falls Optimists' biggest fundraiser is the barn dance that the club holds in October.

"There's too many kids affected and dying from cancer," said Cook.

The Board of Supervisors' proclamation was signed by Foust and Chairman of the Board of Supervisors Sharon Bulova.

"Hopefully, this proclamation will spread the word about what we do and generate more publicity and support," Cook said.

To learn more about the ongoing childhood cancer projects the Great Falls Optimists are engaged in, see www.greatfallsoptimist.org. Donations to the Children's Cancer Campaign may be made by mail to the Great Falls Optimist Club, P.O. Box 233, Great Falls, VA 22066. See www.hopecam.org to learn more about the nonprofit's program.

—DONNA MANZ

A Proper Send Off for Old Glory

Children of the American Revolution conduct flag retirement ceremony for Flag Day.

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

Members of the Children of the American Revolution and the Sons of the American Revolution gathered at the Great Falls Freedom Memorial Tuesday, June 14, to properly dispose of worn out American flags.

"The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning," says Title 36, Chapter 10, Section 176 of the United States Code.

Flag Day is celebrated every June 14 to commemorate the adoption of the U.S. flag by the Second Continental Congress on June 14, 1777. It was officially established by Woodrow Wilson in 1916 and Congress established National Flag Day officially with an Act of Congress in August 1949.

The Children of the American Revolution has held their annual Flag Day ceremony for more than 10 years. Members of the Col. William Grayson, Providence and Freedom Hill societies of the CAR were at this year's ceremony. It was originally at the Great Falls Library parking lot, because the library is a collection point for flags that are worn out or damaged.

"They always did it at the parking lot, but as it filled up because of lacrosse practices, we moved it to the memorial this year," said Ed Heberg of the Friends of Great Falls Freedom Memorial. "We do it on the grass just to make sure the heat doesn't crack

any of the bricks."

A BARREL that the Children of the American Revolution have used in every ceremony was placed on bricks and filled with small pieces of wood to get the fire going. After it heated up, Liezal D'souza of the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department took dozens of flags and retired them in the proper way.

Dozens came from the boxes in the Great Falls Library that has been collected over the years. Some were tiny, hand-held flags and others were large flags that had flown on poles throughout the area. As they were fed into the fire, the polyester flags melted while the cotton ones burned.

Other flags had been collected by Sons of the American Revolution from the graves of early American soldiers who fought in the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. The organization collects the flags at the gravesites across the country as they wear out and replace them with new ones.

The Children of the American Revolution is the group children belong to until they are 22, then they join either the Sons or Daughters of the American Revolution. Larry McKinley, the Senior National 2nd Vice President of the Sons of the American Revolution, said events like this teach the children at a young age how to properly dispose of a flag.

"We do it so the Children of the American Revolution can be trained in patriotism and how to properly dispose of a flag," he said. "Hopefully when they get older they'll know how and can hold similar ceremonies wherever they end up."

McKinley presented a certificate to the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department at the ceremony, to recognize them for Exemplary Patriotism for displaying the flag, and supporting these events.

THE GREAT FALLS LIBRARY collects torn, tattered or worn out flags throughout the year and stores them so that they may be properly disposed of. They are located at 9830 Georgetown Pike.